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## About Big Battleships.

It begins already to seem probable that the final stage—let us hope that it will be the final stage—in the international race of armaments is to be that of rivalry in the building of huge battleships of the *Dreadnaught* type, to have at least twenty thousand tons displacement and to cost, with armament, \$10,000,000 each. The armies have practically reached their limit in most countries, and cannot be much further increased on a peace footing. Most of the older and smaller war vessels are already out of date, rendered useless either by the wear and tear of idleness or by the new and more powerful structures recently devised.

The rivalry, therefore, seems to be concentrating itself upon these gigantic battleships. England has already led off with her *Dreadnaught*, which was built in less than eighteen months. She is propelled by turbine engines, has her main battery composed entirely of 12-inch guns, and in her trial trip made a speed of 21½ knots. In her gun trials the simultaneous discharge of her 12-inch guns did her no structural injury.

The effect of this performance—the speedy construction and successful testing of this monster ship—on the other governments has been electric. Japan has already launched her *Dreadnaught*, the *Satsuma*, a 19,200-ton ship, carrying four 12-inch and twelve 10-inch guns in her main battery, with smaller guns for repelling torpedo attacks. Germany, which has after much hesitation decided upon the adoption of the turbine engine, has planned a 19,000-ton ship carrying fourteen 11-inch, 50-calibre guns of high velocity, making the ship practically equal to the English *Dreadnaught*. Russia is also planning similar ships. Our own government has in prospect a still bigger ship, one of 20,000 tons displacement, carrying ten 12-inch guns,—carried on the centre line of the ship and available on either broadside. “If things continue to go the way they are now moving,” says the *Scientific American*, “the future warship will be a cruiser-battleship of 20,000 tons or more displacement and 22 or 23 knots speed, carrying from eight to twelve 12-inch guns, and a numerous battery of 4.7 or 5-inch guns for repelling torpedo attack.”

And things will continue to go the way they are now going, until the people open their eyes to the stupendous folly of the thing. Great Britain's naval officials, carried off their feet by the success of the one already tested, propose to have four more *Dreadnaughts*. President Roosevelt tells the Naval Committee that we must have at once two *Dreadnaughts*, the one authorized last year and another one provided for this year, and that the old battleships, which are getting ready fast for the junk heap, must be replaced by these ponderous costly monsters.

The Naval Committee says “Amen, Mr. President,” and reports in favor of two *Dreadnaughts*.

The President says that he is “not asking for any increase of the navy.” He means in *number* of ships. That is something, of course, and he expects that that something will put the people to sleep to the gigantic project of increase in size which he is trying to drive through Congress. If the present battleships,—the battleships alone, to say nothing of the cruisers,—of which there are now some twenty-seven, every one of which will be antiquated in ten years, are to be replaced by ten-million-dollar *Dreadnaughts*, we shall have to pay in ten years, for this single line of expense, the sum of \$270,000,000, or at the rate of \$27,000,000 a year.

And this program of the President assumes that the *Dreadnaught* type of battleship will continue, whereas the probability is, judging from developments in recent years, that some new invention will introduce some fresh type, and the whole program have to be begun over again, after the sinking of tens of millions in these big vessels. The President himself is already complaining that the government has squandered great sums on some of the older ships, and he urges the building of the *Dreadnaughts* as an actual measure of economy!

At the national convention for the promotion of foreign commerce held last month in Washington, the President assured us again that “the prime use of the United States navy is to avert war.” What is this war of which the President has such everlasting dread? Whence is it coming? What are the signs of it, that we should be spending a hundred millions and more a year to be prepared to meet it, or to keep it from falling upon us like a thief in the night? He gives us no hint. In all the multitudinous utterances which he has made on the subject, he has never uttered a word, so far as we remember, that would lead us to guess the sources of his fear. It is grossly unfair to the people to be forever urging them to these great sacrifices, without showing them what real grounds there are for demanding them, if such exist. The fact is, there are no sources, except purely imaginary ones.

In this same convention for the promotion of foreign commerce Mr. Roosevelt made a noble and generous plea for “scrupulous fairness and justice,” for “a tone of courtesy and consideration” in our dealings with foreign powers, big or little, European or Asiatic. But he seems to ignore entirely the efficiency of justice and fairness, of good manners and the Golden Rule, in promoting similar feelings and conduct in turn toward us. “Do not give any nation any cause for offense, and on the other hand keep our navy at such a pitch of efficiency as to make it a strong provocation of good manners in other nations.” Is that justice, is it courtesy, is it scrupulous fairness to other nations, which are friendly to us? Is it good

manners? It comes very near being an open insult to speak of other powers as if our only certain hope of securing justice and fair treatment from them lay in carrying a cudgel big enough to break all their heads on occasion.

That is the sort of thinking and talking which has kept the nations apart, made them distrustful and mutually hostile, and which has produced the vast armaments of our time. There is no greater and more insidious international injustice, discourtesy and bad manners than those expressed in these last "short-lived monsters" of the sea, the *Dreadnaughts*. The time has fully come when this ought all to cease. The opportunity to put an end to it will come when the second Hague Conference meets. And if the governments are sincere in their pretenses that their rivalry in increasing their armaments is solely in the interests of peace, they will hasten to outdo each other at The Hague in arranging an agreement by which they will not only refer all their disputes to the International Court of Arbitration, which they have created, but also stop at once and forever their costly and disgraceful rivalry in armaments.

### Secretary Root in Canada.

Secretary Root's recent visit to Ottawa, Canada, as the guest of Earl Gray, the Governor-General of the Dominion, was as significant in its way as an international event as his more extended trip through the South American capitals last summer. In his discussion before the Canadian Club, on January 22, of the problems confronting the two countries and of their mutual interests and relations, he showed the same fine insight, high idealism, broad international spirit and delicate tact and good taste as when discussing in Rio Janeiro the problems and mutual relations of the American republics.

Mr. Root spoke practically as if Canada were one of the group of American independent states, a sister republic of our own. This it essentially is, notwithstanding its formal connection with the British Empire. He could not help "breathing freely" in the atmosphere of a country which was guided by the principles of justice and liberty which have been carried by the English-speaking race wherever it has gone. His outspoken admiration of the development and progress of the Dominion in the forty years since he first personally knew it was as sincere and generous as if he had been talking patriotism on his own side of the border.

He laid emphasis on the fact that the citizens of the United States, millions of them, "look upon the great material and spiritual progress of Canada with no feelings of jealousy, but with admiration, with hope and with gratitude." That, we feel sure, is essentially true

of all our people who really know what Canada and Canadian institutions and civilization are.

Particularly impressive were the passages of the speech relating to differences between the two countries. "There have been," he said, "in the past, and in the nature of things there will be continually arising in the future, matters of difference between the two nations. How could it be otherwise, with adjacent seacoasts and more than three thousand miles of boundary upon which we march? How could it be otherwise in the nature of the races at work? Savage nature is never subdued to uses of man, empires are never builded save by men of vigor and power, men intense in the pursuit of their objects, strong in their confidence in their own opinions, engrossed in the pursuit of their ends sometimes even to the exclusion of thoughtfulness for the interests and feelings of others. But let us school ourselves and teach our children to believe that, whatever differences arise, different understandings as to the facts on different sides of the boundary line, the effect of different environment, different points of view, rather than intentional or conscious unfairness, are at the basis of the differences." But all the differences he asserted to be "but trifling compared with the great fact that two nations are pursuing the same ideals of liberty and justice, are doing their work side by side for the peace and righteousness of the world, in peace with each other."

As compared with differences, however large they may loom when held close to the eye, he thought this peaceful activity of the two nations, side by side, to be among the great facts of history. "The fact that for ninety years, under a simple exchange of notes limiting the armament of the two countries, in terms which have become an antiquated example of naval literature, to single one-hundred-ton boats with single eighteen-pound cannon,—after all, the fact that for ninety years under that simple exchange of notes we have been living on either side of this three thousand miles of boundary in peace, with no more thought or fear of hostilities than as though we were the same peoples, is a great fact in history." And he was certainly justified in holding that this remarkable fact of history was a most instructive and inspiring example to guide the two nations for the future. "Within a few years, eight years from now, we shall be able to celebrate the centennial anniversary of one hundred years of peaceful fellowship,—a hundred years, during which no part of the fruits of industry and enterprise have been diverted from the building up of peaceful and happy homes, from the exercise and promotion of religion, from the education of children and the succor of the distressed and unfortunate, to be expended by warlike attack by one people upon the other."

Alluding, in closing, to the fact that great numbers